

GRADE 8 STANDARDS AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Strand: Language Development *(Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult text.)*

DISCUSSION

8.LD-D.1. Identify techniques to improve productivity of group discussions, including setting clear goals, understanding the purpose of the team project and the ground rules for decision making, and setting deadlines.

Example: In literature discussion groups, students work as a group to prepare a presentation to the class. They determine individual roles and responsibilities and set the ground rules for group discussion and decision making.

QUESTIONING, LISTENING, AND CONTRIBUTING

8.LD-Q.2. Explain different ways to read a poem aloud for different effects on the listener.

Example: Students read aloud different forms of poetry, including an elegy (a mournful poem for the dead), an ode (a poem of praise), and a sonnet (a rhymed poem of 14 lines). Use poems such as John Ciardi's "Elegy for Jog," Pablo Neruda's "Odes to Common Things," and Edgar Allan Poe's sonnet "To Science."

8.LD-Q.3. Paraphrase the speaker's purpose and point of view and ask relevant questions concerning a speaker's content, delivery, and purpose.

Example: Students listen to a series of presentations from community leaders about important issues facing residents. Subsequently, students discuss the content, delivery, and purposes of the various presentations.

8.LD-Q.4. Respond to persuasive messages with questions, challenges, or affirmations.

Example: Students research the fight for District of Columbia statehood with local organizations, and they respond to the debates that took place in the U.S. House of Representatives in November 1993 when statehood was defeated and to new proposals in Congress (e.g., Senator Joseph Lieberman's "No Taxation Without Representation Act of 2003").

ORAL PRESENTATION

8.LD-O.5. Create a rubric (scoring guide) based on categories generated by the teacher and students (content, organization, presentation style, vocabulary) to prepare and assess the presentations listed in this section.

Example: As students rehearse a program of poetry for residents of a nursing home, students apply criteria for poetry reading and presentation skills.

8.LD-O.6. Present persuasive speeches that use appropriate techniques such as descriptions, anecdotes, case studies, analogies, and illustrations to advocate a position.

Example: Using research completed about public transportation, students give a persuasive presentation to the class on why the community should or should not invest more resources in public transportation (or another topic).

8.LD-O.7. Distinguish and produce formal and informal language appropriate to the audience and purpose, including knowing how to use language for dramatic effect.

Example: Students watch Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's musical My Fair Lady, an adaptation of Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion, and discuss how the musical presents different dialects (and formal and informal language) and how the language is important to the conflict in the story.

Strand: Language Development (continued)**VOCABULARY AND CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT**

8.LD-V.8. Know the origins and meanings of common foreign words used in English.

Example: Students research the origins of common nouns (popcorn, denim, bus), as well as the meanings and origins of erudite foreign phrases (sub rosa, caveat emptor, carte blanche, quid pro quo), and popularly used foreign phrases (bon appetit, a la carte, bon voyage, numero uno), for the purpose of creating their own etymological dictionary.

8.LD-V.9. Monitor text for unknown words or words with novel meanings, using word, sentence, and paragraph clues to determine meaning.

Example: Students work to understand the meaning of pickle in a sentence, such as "The pickle was an important part of metal working." They use a dictionary to help clarify the use of the word "pickle" in this context.

8.LD-V.10. Understand and explain "shades of meaning" for related words.

Example: Students experiment with the power of words in their writing. Students are asked to re-write sentences with related words. For example, they substitute the word "mad" with such words as annoyed, irritated, aggravated, irked, miffed, peeved, angry, irate, furious, enraged.

8.LD-V.11. Determine meanings, pronunciations, syllabication, synonyms, antonyms, correct spellings, parts of speech, or etymologies of words using dictionaries, glossaries, thesauri, CD-ROMs, and the Internet.

Example: Students research the origins of common nouns (popcorn, denim, bus) and popular foreign phrases (bon appetit, au revoir, carte blanche), for the purpose of creating their own etymological dictionary.

Strand: Informational Text *(Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult text.)***EXPOSITORY TEXT**

8.IT-E.1. Compare (and contrast) the central ideas, problems, or situations from readings on a specific topic selected to reflect a range of viewpoints.

Example: Students read articles on the same current topic in magazines, such as Time and Newsweek, and editorials in national or local newspapers. They compare and contrast the texts in how they present the issue.

8.IT-E.2. Explain how an author uses word choice and organization of text to achieve his purposes.

Example: Students read works by authors such as Maya Angelou and Langston Hughes to look at how each author uses language to achieve his or her purposes.

8.IT-E.3. Distinguish between the concept of theme in a literary work and the author's explicit or implicit purpose in an expository text.

DOCUMENT AND PROCEDURAL TEXT

8.IT-DP.4. Evaluate the adequacy of details and facts to achieve a specific purpose.

Example: Students compare examples of a variety of instructional or technical manuals, such as those for a computer, hair appliance, camera, or electronic game, brought to class by different students. They evaluate the manuals.

ARGUMENT AND PERSUASIVE TEXT

8.IT-A.5. Recognize organizational structures and arguments for and against an issue.

Example: After reading a piece of historical nonfiction, such as When Justice Failed: The Fred Korematsu Story by Steven A. Chin about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, students describe the author's perspective on the events described and how the author demonstrates this point of view throughout the text.

8.IT-A.6. Distinguish facts from opinions in selections such as editorials, newspaper articles, essays, reviews, and critiques, providing supporting evidence from the text.

Example: Students read and analyze the organization of the "pro" and of the "con" editorials and news articles on a topic of interest in the Washington Times, The Washington Post, or USA Today. In each, students decide if facts are clearly distinguished from opinions. They determine whether reporters or columnists included similar or different facts and possible reasons why.

8.IT-A.7. Compare and contrast readings on the same topic and explain how authors reach different conclusions, beginning with the author's stated position.

Example: Students read two political columnists in The Washington Post and identify the authors' main arguments. In each, decide if the argument is simply and clearly stated. Students decide if there are at least three major points in support of the argument, with the strongest argument given first. Then they discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the argument and cite the authors' best evidence as set forth in the columns.

Strand: Literary Text *(Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult text.)***CONNECTIONS****8.LT-C.1.** Relate a literary work to artifacts, artistic creations, or historical sites of the period of its setting.

Example: Students read David Copperfield and Great Expectations by Charles Dickens. In order to understand the historical background of the works, students study Victorian art, architecture, and dress and contrast the lives of commoners with the lives of privileged individuals.

GENRE**8.LT-G.2.** Identify and analyze how the different genres (e.g., poetry, short story, biography, drama) used by one particular author accomplish different aesthetic purposes.

Example: Students read several selections from Avi, including an adventure story, a mystery, and several works of historical fiction. Titles could include Crispin: Cross of Lead, Nothing But the Truth, The Escape from Home, The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle, and The Man Who Was Poe.

THEME**8.LT-T.3.** Compare (and contrast) similar themes across a variety of selections, distinguishing theme from topic.

Example: Students explore the theme that heroism demands unusual courage and risk-taking by reading fiction and biographies, such as Rod Serling's television play Requiem for a Heavyweight and David Remnick's King of the World: Muhammed Ali and the Rise of an American Hero.

FICTION**8.LT-F.4.** Determine how central characters' qualities influence the resolution of the conflict.

Example: Students read stories by Edgar Allan Poe such as "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Black Cat," identify characters' traits and states of mind, and analyze how these characteristics establish the conflict and progression of the plot.

8.LT-F.5. Interpret a character's traits, emotions, or motivations, and provide supporting evidence from a text.

Example: Students analyze the way a theme is developed throughout a book, such as the themes of prejudice and criticism of others shown throughout the events and characters in Summer of My German Soldier by Bette Greene.

8.LT-F.6. Analyze the influence of setting (e.g., time of day, place, historical period, situation) on the problem and resolution.

Example: Students recognize the influence of the settings in a book, such as the role of the North and South in the book The Watsons Go to Birmingham — 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis, in which an African American family from Michigan goes to visit relatives in Alabama in the summer of 1963.

LITERARY NONFICTION**8.LT-LNF.7.** Analyze word choice (voice, tone, biblical or metaphoric language or imagery) in well-known speeches and political text.

Example: Students study the Gettysburg Address and Martin Luther King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail," noting uncommon phrasing or words.

POETRY**8.LT-P.8.** Analyze the effects of sound (alliteration, internal rhyme, rhyme scheme), figurative language (personification, metaphor, simile, hyperbole), and graphics (capital letters, line length, word position) on the meaning of a poem.

Example: Students explore ways in which poets use sound (as accompaniment) in humorous poems by authors such as Langston Hughes, Laura Richards, Lewis Carroll, Maya Angelou, Ogden Nash, Nikki Giovanni, or Shel Silverstein; or (as reinforcement of meaning) in serious poems by such writers as Robert Louis Stevenson, Rita Dove, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Sonia Sanchez, Al Young, Marianne Moore, or Alfred Noyes. Students compose individual poems and incorporate the above effects.

Strand: Literary Text (continued)**DRAMA**

8.LT-D.9. Identify and analyze how two different playwrights achieve characterization through dialogue in their plays.

Example: Students read The Piano Lesson by August Wilson as an exploration of various settings, plots, and characters, citing evidence from dialogue. In this play, students discuss the dramatic ironies and conflicts found in plots and the symbolism. Students focus on the dialogue of the principal actor from Our Town, the Stage Manager, who remains on stage the entire time explaining much of the action.

STYLE AND LANGUAGE

8.LT-S.10. Draw conclusions about style, mood, tone, and meaning of prose, poetry, and drama based on the author's word choice and use of figurative language.

Example: Students read or listen to three poems from Stephen Dunning's anthology, Reflections On a Gift of Watermelon Pickle that employ extended metaphor. They discuss the effect of extended metaphor poems on the reader or listener.

TRADITIONAL NARRATIVE AND CLASSICAL LITERATURE

8.LT-TN.11. Identify conventions in epic tales (e.g., the quest, the hero's tasks, special weapons or clothing).

Example: Students read stories about Perseus, Theseus, or Hercules and create their own hero tale, employing conventions such as interventions of gods, monsters, or a series of required tasks.

Strand: Research (Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult text.)

8.R.1. Apply steps for obtaining information from a variety of sources, organizing information, documenting sources, and presenting research in individual and group projects.

- Differentiate between paraphrasing and using direct quotes in a report.
- Integrate relevant information gathered.
- Understand the concept of plagiarism and how (or why) to avoid it; understand rules for paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting, as well as conventions for incorporating information from Internet-based sources in particular.
- Compose documents with appropriate formatting using word-processing skills and principles of design (e.g., margins, tabs, spacing, columns, page orientation).
- Organize and present research using the standards in the Writing strand.
- Document information and quotations and use a consistent format for footnotes or endnotes.
- Use standard bibliographic format to document sources (e.g., MLA, APA, CMS).

Example: Students research the topic of the benefits and drawbacks of public transportation. Beyond gathering information from electronic and print sources, students interview local leaders about whether and why or why not they are in support of expanding public transportation options.

Strand: Writing (Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult text.)

IMAGINATIVE WRITING

8.W-I.1. Write stories or scripts that include

- well-developed characters and setting,
- dialogue,
- clear conflict and resolution, and
- sufficient descriptive detail.

Example: Students use memoirs such as The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano and The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass as a framework for writing their own stories.

EXPOSITORY WRITING

8.W-E.2. Write coherent multiparagraph compositions (including compare-and-contrast essays) that

- include a thesis statement,
- use logical organization,
- make effective use of detail and rhetorical devices, and
- include variety in sentence structure and transition sentences to link paragraphs.

Example: After reading some Grimm fairy tales and folktales from other countries, such as Japan, Russia, India, and the United States, students identify the beliefs and values that are highlighted in each of these folktales and develop a theory to explain why similar tales appear in many different cultures.

8.W-E.3. Write content-based research reports that

- pose relevant questions and have a clear controlling idea;
- support main idea(s) with details, facts, and explanations from multiple authoritative sources and organize them effectively;
- organize and record information on charts, maps, and graphs as appropriate; and
- use quotations, footnotes or endnotes, and a standard format for works cited (e.g., MLA, APA, CMS).

Example: Students research the topic of the benefits and drawbacks of public transportation. They conduct research to learn why some experts argue that we should use more public transportation. They survey parents and friends to find out how often they use public transportation for school, business, or pleasure travel. Students summarize the findings and write a report on the pros and cons of public transportation, including charts and graphs to support their findings.

8.W-E.4. Write and justify interpretations of literary or expository reading that

- organize the interpretation around several clear ideas, premises, or images and
- develop and justify the interpretation through sustained use of examples and textual evidence.

Example: After reading Mark Twain's Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Theodore Taylor's The Cay, write an essay describing the different ways that the characters in these novels speak (using slang words and regional dialects) and analyzing how this enhances or detracts from the book overall.

Strand: Writing *(continued)***EXPOSITORY WRITING (CONTINUED)****8.W-E.5.** Write persuasive (pro/con) essays that

- include a well-defined thesis that sets forth a clear and knowledgeable position, theory, or generalization;
- support arguments with well-articulated evidence, examples, and reasoning, differentiating between evidence and opinion; and
- arrange details, reasons, and examples effectively, anticipating and answering reader concerns and counterarguments.

Example: Using research completed about public transportation, students write a persuasive letter to the mayor on why the community should or should not invest more resources in public transportation.

REVISION**8.W-R.6.** Revise writing for word choice using a variety of references, appropriate organization, consistent point of view, and transitions among paragraphs, passages, and ideas.

Example: Students work with a partner to revise their writing to ensure another reader could follow and understand the reasoning behind their conclusions. Students add graphics and text design, where appropriate, to make the content clearer and easier to follow.

Strand: Media *(Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult text.)***8.M.1.** Analyze the effect of images, text, and sound in electronic journalism on the viewer, distinguishing the techniques used in each to achieve these effects.

Example: Students compare how newspapers, radio, television, and Internet news outlets cover the same story, such as a day in a political campaign, analyzing how words, sounds, and still or moving images are used in each medium. For their final project, they write about how the medium of communication affects the story conveyed.

8.M.2. Create multimedia presentations and written reports on the same subject, and compare the differences in effects of each medium.

Example: In small groups, students create reports on the U. S. Supreme Court: one a written report and the other multimedia presentation. When both groups have presented their reports to the class, classmates evaluate the information they learned from each presentation.

Strand: English Language Conventions *(Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult text.)*

8.EL.1. Use varied sentence types and sentence openings to reinforce ideas.
8.EL.2. Distinguish phrases from clauses.
8.EL.3. Identify and use infinitives and participles and clear pronoun/antecedent reference, as well as properly placed modifiers.
8.EL.4. Use subordination, coordination, apposition, and other devices to indicate the relationship between ideas clearly.
8.EL.5. Use colons in business letters, semicolons to punctuate independent clauses, and commas when linking two clauses with a conjunction in compound sentences.
8.EL.6. Combine, reorder, and reduce sentences.
8.EL.7. Spell correctly, including commonly confused words (its/it's, affect/effect) and irregular plurals (e.g., sheep).